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### Oral History Interview: Ike Effingham

Ike Effingham

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ORAL HISTORY

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OWENS GLASS HISTORY PROJECT

TAPE #5

INTERVIEW WITH: IKE EFFINGHAM

CONDUCTED BY: JENNIFER STOCK

DATE OF INTERVIEW: JUNE 3, 1994

Jennifer: Okay. (laugh)

Ike: Right. (laugh)

Jennifer: Yes, I think we're okay. Uh, today I'm speaking with uh, Ike Effingham.

Ike: This is Clifford Ike Effingham. Uh, born February 25, 19 and 20. And uh, worked for Owens-Illinois 43 years.

Jennifer: Today is June 3, 1994, and my name's Jennifer Stock. And uh, where would you like to begin? (laugh) Uh, tell me about uh, when you first came to work with...mmm-hmm.

Ike: Owens? I started there in 19 and uh, 41. I uh, went to uh, East High trade school to learn the machinist trade. And then I uh, got uh, the job down there in the machine repair department and stayed in that all my 43 years in machine building, uh, machinist work, machine design and so forth. And uh, that's how I spent my (laugh)...

Jennifer: Forty-three...

Ike: ...all my years. Yeah.

Jennifer: Forty-three is that what you said?

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: And you went to work in uh, uh, you went to work at the plant...Did you tell me that already? (laugh)

Ike: Uh, 1941.

Jennifer: 1941, okay.

Ike: Yeah, uh-huh.

Jennifer: That's 1984. Um, did you have uh, why did you stay in the machinist shop, uh, your whole time?

Ike: Why'd I do what?

Jennifer: Uh, (laugh)

Ike: I can't...[inaudible]

Jennifer: ...is gonna be fun. Um, uh, I've talked to s-, a lotta people that like went to different places...

Ike: Oh yeah.



Jennifer: ...different positions.

Ike: Mmm-hmm.

Jennifer: Was there a particular reason why you stayed in the machinist?

Ike: Yes, I, I, I wanted to do that type work.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: An-, and it was a higher paying job.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And most, and uh, machine repair paid more money per hour than...

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: ...just about all the other departments, so that was an incentive...[inaudible] (laugh)

Jennifer: Yes, yes. Certainly (laugh).

Ike: [inaudible]...good work.

Jennifer: I mean, what do you do? (laugh)

Ike: Good work, and then uh, we uh, see the plant ran 24 hours a day, seven days a week...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...well, we had the full upkeep of all the forming machines that made the bottles.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: So, we worked seven days a week...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...uh, week in and week out a lotta times, you know, i-, if need be. Building new machines, which was very good money, you know.

CHILDREN TALKING IN BACKGROUND

Jennifer: Yeah. That was the heart of the plant.

Ike: Yeah. Yeah. Right. Yeah. Yeah.

Jennifer: Couldn't do it without you.

Ike: And it was day work.

Jennifer: And it was all day work?

Ike: Yes.

Jennifer: You didn't do shift work?

Ike: No, I didn't...[inaudible]

Jennifer: Ahh.

Ike: Most of the others...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: were in the uh, production departments' shift.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And I don't like shifts, so I, I got to work days. (laugh)

Jennifer: Yeah, especially rotating shifts. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: Um.

Ike: It's rough.

Jennifer: Yes, I, I would think so. Um, so were you in...

PHONE RINGS IN BACKGROUND

Jennifer: Should I stop? She'll get that. Um...

Ike: She'll get that.

Jennifer: ...so, you were in, did you ever go into a management position within the machinist uh, department?

Ike: Did I do what?

Jennifer: Did you ever go into a management position within the machinist...?

Ike: No. Uh-huh...

Jennifer: No.

Ike: ...just uh, a crew leader. It was still a hourly job.

Jennifer: Crew leader?

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Um, so you were, you were, all the machines, or just the basic forming machines were under...?

Ike: Uhhh, our upkeep in-, included the basic forming machines, the forming feeders where the glass comes through, you know,...

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: ...mechanism that does your cutoff. And uh, and we took care a the uh, what they called the layers, that's where your bottles come from the hot end to the packing department.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: The drives and all on that uh, we maintained that also.

Jennifer: Hmmm. And uh, so did you construct the plant's, uh, excuse me, did you construct the machines there?

Ike: Yes, uh-huh.

Jennifer: Yes, so you didn't just, jus-, you didn't just repair?

Ike: No, no, it wa-, it was uh, (clear throat) at one time, you see, we had 34 machines running...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...in the forming department, 34. So uh, our goal was to build, rebuild one IS machine per month.

Jennifer: Oh, I see. Completely?

Ike: [inaudible]...kept replacing as they wore out, we, we would have a new machine to, to uh, move in, and uh, we made, for many years, we made uh, most of our parts that went into these machines.

Jennifer: Oh, you had a...

Ike: In the machine shop. We had a, just a real machine shop there too.

Jennifer: ...so you had like a...

Ike: We had lathes, molding machines, grinders, uh, all that in the uh, in the machine shop.

Jennifer: H-, how large a facility was this machine shop?

Ike: What?

Jennifer: H-, how large a facility was the machine shop?

Ike: Well, it was about uh, oh, it was probly uh, uh, 40, 40 foot long an-, and probly 30 wide. Maybe 50 foot long, somethin' like that.

Jennifer: Hmmm. And how, how many people were uh, working in the...?

Ike: At one time, we had uhhh, up to the, 70 people.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And as the years went by, they uh, reduced the number...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...in there.

Jennifer: Uh, in what way, uh, how did they go about reducing the number? Was that because of less machines to work on or...?

Ike: It was usually uh, by attrition, uh, somebody that would retire and they didn't uh, wanna replace 'em, see.

Jennifer: Freeze.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: (cough)

Ike: Or uh, we did have lay-offs coming up, and some people laid back, see a lotta those people came outta the other departments into machine repair.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

Ike: You know, they come outta selecting, they come outta corrugated. Well, you come a slack time when those people would be laid off back to their...

Jennifer: Back to their...

Ike: ...original department.

Jennifer: Oh, that's interesting.

Ike: Mmm-hmm.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Right. Yeah.

Jennifer: You were there the whole time? (laugh)

Ike: Yes, no lay-offs. (laugh) I worked uh, I's in the service three years. They gave me time, my time...[inaudible]...my seniority went right on.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And service time, yeah.

Jennifer: Right, right. Hmmm. Um, well, maybe you could, since you, because of your long career, maybe you could uh, tell me about uh, changes you saw in the plant, like in the production process uh, through your career.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: I mean, how were things different?

Ike: (mumble) Do you have um, do you have the history of O-I? Or would you like it?

Jennifer: I'd like it from you. Yeah. Sure.

Ike: Uh, uh, see, in 19 an uh, 1914, the Charles Boldt Glass Company of Cincinnati came to Huntington. The city of Huntington gave them the land, and it...

Jennifer: Gave them the land?

Ike: ...[inaudible] glass plant. Yes, mmm-hmm. Charles Boldt Glass Company.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And in 19 and uh, in 19 and uh, uh, I've got this here somewhere...

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: ...okay, in 1926, Owens-Illinois bought the Charles Boldt Glass Company. Uh, Owens-Illinois was the combination of the uh, Illinois Glass Company in Alton, Illinois and Owens, Mike Owens developed the Owens uh, glass forming machine. Mike Owens. [inaudible]

Jennifer: I, I, I've seen this machine, yeah.

Ike: And then they combined the two and made Owens-Illinois.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Well, they came in 1926, bought the Charles Boldt plant. And uh, before Owens, the Charles Boldt plant uh, had only what we call miller machines uh, uh, rotary, small rotary machines made the bottle.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: Then when Owens came in, they brought in the Mike Owens Owens' machine which was a huge machine. A-R-A-Q uh, large manufactured...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...gallon jugs and all.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: So uh, this went on, it was a, an Owens plant until, Owens machine plant until uh, uh, about 19 and 30, and they got their first uh, IS machine. That is uh, that is an individual section machine. IS stands for individual section. Now uh, the rotary machines were wonderful machines, but when one part went bad, they had to shut the whole machine down.

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: Completely down. N-, no uh, no production...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...at all. An IS machine, you could shut one head down, one section down, you could continue operating whatever you had...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...two, three, four, five other sections.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: So it wa-. it was a good, it was a good machine.

Jennifer: Yeah, I bet.

Ike: So they uh, they went in for that.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And in 19 uh, 50 uh, let's see, uh, 19 and um, okay 1949...

Jennifer: Mmm.

Ike: ...they started doing away with the big Owens machines...

Jennifer: Ahh.

Ike: ...the big, and went completely to IS machines.

Jennifer: So they kept the two of 'em com-, going at the same time?

Ike: Well, the- they, up to that time...

Jennifer: Up to that time.

Ike: ...they had two...

Jennifer: Two.

Ike: ...they had two, what we call, two tanks that flow...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...IS machines...

Jennifer: IS.

Ike: And then uh, three of the big Owens machines.

Jennifer: So there were both kinds then?

Ike: Yeah. Uh-huh. And in 1949, they went completely, or started, going to the IS com-, all, and that's when we had the 34 machines operating up and down the line. At one time, we had uh, up to 2,000 people working there at peak periods.

Jennifer: An-, and you would call, what, what period would you call like the peak periods?

Ike: Oh, i-, it was uh, it was from uh, uh, it was in the 50s because the uh, after they did away with the Owens machine, why production went up...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...quite a bit, so uh, there, uh, was a higher uh, percent of people working there.

Jennifer: Sure. Sure. All right. And so you had the IS machines up to the point of the closing? You were...

Ike: Up to the closing, yeah, mmm-hmm. And it started off with a, a little four-section single IS machine, and then when they closed down, they were operating a uh, eight-head, 10-head or quad, that means uh, four bottles and a mold,

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...and it had e-, actually evolved at, at, production-wise, that far, you see.

Jennifer: So you had [inaudible]

Ike: And they just pouring bottles out. I mean, quite productive.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: See, with four bottles in the mold...

Jennifer: Right, times...

Ike: ...and they started out with a little four-section one-bottle in a mold, so you can see the...

Jennifer: Yeah, exponentially. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah, right.

Jennifer: Yeah. Um...

Ike: Um...

Jennifer: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) You probly got all this from somebody else.

Jennifer: Not on tape. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) Oh yeah. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh) That's the important part. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) Oh, okay.

Jennifer: Um, hmm, excuse me, (sigh) well, how did you find, how did you, how did you find out about uh, uh, how did you decide you were going to go to work for the...



Ike: For Owens?

Jennifer: ...Owens-Illinois plant? Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, as I had stated, I went at night...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...at uh, East trade school...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...took machine shop.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: I was working for the uh, Pure Oil company of a day and go to school 6 to 10 at night.

Jennifer: You were working for the what company?

Ike: Pure Oil Company.

Jennifer: Pure Oil company.

Ike: Yeah, uh-huh.

Jennifer: And Owens offered the best position...

Ike: Well, uh...

Jennifer: ...for what you were trained for?

Ike: ...uh, yeah, the co-, the, how I got on down there was that there was one of the instructors was the machine repair supervisor at Owens, so um, he was uh, they had two machine shops. He wasn't my instructor, but he would come over into uh, my uh, shop and talk. I didn't know who he was or anything like that.

Jennifer: Mmm, mmm.

Ike: And as it happened, it was Kelly Walters, and he would come over and talk and so one night, he said, uh, "Would you like to have a job in the machine shop?" And I said, "Sure." You know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Yeah. That's what I'm doin' this for. (laugh)

Ike: So, so, so he said, "You go down to Owens in the morning and tell 'im, I'll tell 'em, but you go down and tell 'em I sent you. Kelly sent, Walters sent you and..." So I went down 10 o'clock 'at morning, and they hired me.

Jennifer: Wow. Wow. (laugh) (cough)

Ike: (laugh) That was my future.

Jennifer: That's so easy. That's so easy.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Could you spell his name please, uh?

Ike: Kelly? K-E-L-L-Y, Walters. W-A-L-T-E-R-S. Kelly Walters.

Jennifer: All right, thank you.

Ike: He was the machine repair supervisor.

Jennifer: Hmm.

Ike: And he was my boss for oh, probably uh, 30 years, then he retired. He was a swell fella. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh) I bet. (laugh) I'm sure he took a liking to you. That's wonderful. Um, do you have, did you have any other family working at the plant?

Ike: Say what?

Jennifer: Did you have any other family working at the plant?

Ike: In my family?

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: No.

Jennifer: No.

Ike: (laugh) Mo-, most people here came from Wayne County. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: Really, they did.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Gosh, they was, uh, well, they really hired that way. Really, you know. Uh, uh, and you got good people, whether you get members of family or neighbors...that's the kind of plant it was.

Jennifer: Wherever. Yeah.

Ike: You know.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: So, 'ere wasn't too many out in here. I was raised out in this area.

Jennifer: Oh, you were raised in...

Ike: Beverly Hills, right here, yeah. And there wasn't many people out here went to Owens...Most of our people here went to C & O, or International Nickel, up in this area.

Jennifer: Yeah. I would think so. Hmmm. Hmm. Well, um, (tapping of pen in background) mmm, mmm, how'd you meet your wife?

Ike: Uh, this is our second time around, both of us.

Jennifer: Oh yeah.

Ike: Kind of a unique thing. I was married uh, (pause) 30, 30, no 26 years when my wife died. I had three children. She died, and uh, she uh, her husband, they both worked at Owens. Clara and Lewis Hogan. Uh, they both worked at Owens and uh, uh, in fact, Lewis, her husband, died right there on the job.

Jennifer: Oh really?

Ike: Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: Wou-, would you like to tell me about that?

Ike: Well, he, he had a heart condition, and uh, he, he worked in what we call the basement of the machine repair, you know. We had storage areas down there. He worked down there, and uh, he was having his lunch, and everyone else had went out of the little shop he worked in there. And uh, they came back, he was setting in his chair, expired. So my wife [inaudible], and Clara worked in purchasing so we got, you know, that's how we got together.

Jennifer: Yeah. Huh.

Ike: So we been married now, uh, (pause) 20, 20 years.

Jennifer: That's wonderful.

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING.

Jennifer: Did that happen a lot? Did people uh, uh, uh, meet their spouses at work often?

Ike: Oh, oh, oh sure.

Jennifer: Yeah? (laugh)

Ike: See, it was a unique situation. We had about 800 women working there at one time. And about 800 men. And there was a lotta, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah, sure. One-to-one ratio.

Ike: Get acquainted there, you know, and so forth. Some of 'em shouldn't have but they did. (laugh)

Jennifer: Yeah. (laugh)

Ike: You know, I mean, there was a lotta, you know, to where you have that, when you have a lotta people working together.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah. How would you, how would you describe that, that, I mean, that, that intimates the kind of sense of community um, how would you describe that kind of informal community uh, you know, that sprung up uh, outside of work? You know, what was that like? I mean...

Ike: You mean, people out-, socializing after they worked?

Jennifer: Yeah, ties made outside the work, you know...

Ike: Oh yeah. Well, see uh, it wa-, there again, it was something the uh, the shifts, of course, they, they wor-, had their days off through the week.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: They had it Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Well, each shift was just like the department. And they, they, they socialized on their days off, whether it was Wednesday and Thursday or Friday and Saturday, where the day people was Sa-, Saturday and Sunday. See, so, and, uh, they, they would do that. Each shift had their things going, and the day people had theirs. See, have you ever been in our clubhouse? The Owens clubhouse. Uh, it was a wonderful place. They built it, they built it in 1940 down adjacent to the plant. And uh, for a number of years, that was the social uh, horizon, I mean, that's where people had their dances, they had their parties, they had their, you know, everything, children's parties. Our clubhouse was number one.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: And uh...

Jennifer: (cough)

Ike: ...that went on until the advent of uh, television. (laugh)  
That clubhouse was busy, you know what I mean?

Jennifer: Oh yeah.

Ike: They had, you know, everything going on. So people would do that. They would socialize and get together that way too, you know.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: 'Cause the Owenizer club was the focal point for us.

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: And, and the company went all out...

Jennifer: So this was totally funded...

Ike: ...for, for their people.

Jennifer: ...by the company?

Ike: They would put on department parties, they'd put on shift parties, Christmas parties, Easter parties, uh, all this was uh, it was just a...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...generous uh, uh, company...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...to the employees.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And the Owenizer club had, you know, officers, every department is represented, had the president and everything. And, and it was made up of the uh, social council, welfare council, and the uh,...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...athletic council. And each, you know, had their, had their members and all, and uh...

Jennifer: Like...

Ike: We had some wonderful plant managers like that. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh) [inaudible]

Ike: Yeah, yeah. They were. They uh, uh, they, they were just good to us.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, well, well, um, it was a very good situation. Certainly, it was a good situation for everyone.

Ike: Yeah, it, it was. We had a, it was uh,...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...uh, it was just something that in our personnel department that they, they had, had this program set up and nothing was too good for the, their people. And they were good to us. They had a good insurance program, they had uh, a wel-, the welfare took care of people who were havin' difficulty uh, you know.

Jennifer: Is what the welfare council was about?

Ike: Council, yes.

Jennifer: And they took care of...

Ike: And, and they even had a, a building full of wheelchairs and crutches and...

Jennifer: My goodness.

Ike: ...and they had hospital beds which, you know, went out to the people that needed them.

Jennifer: Expensive equipment. That's incredible.

Ike: Yeah. It really, it really...it really was. It uh, thinking back, I know, I know nothing that would, any other company would compare. (laugh)

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. No, no, never.

Ike: But uh, at that time, it was a, a booming industry.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: The uh, Toledo, where our main office is and our chairman and president of O-I, they uh, they were uh, the-, they were, they would come in the plant,...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...and act almost like they knew you.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: You know.

Jennifer: Or wanted to know you. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) Yeah, that's right. They were friendly and all, but it changed over a period of time because uh, it started out with the Ledis family out of Alton, and they were the uh, uh, controlling stockholders of Owens-Illinois.

Jennifer: Could you spell that name?

Ike: L-E-D-I-S, Ledis. Uh, they owned the controlling stock. Well, they would, uh, people uh, was their number one object, really. They were a benevolent bunch of people. And then uh, after that, for a number of years, the same thing followed, and each plant manager was allocated a sum of money to do that. He had his money and he used it.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: They built a big rod-n-gun club out in uh, Wayne County. [inaudible]

Jennifer: [inaudible]

Ike: And uh, we had all of our events out there in the summertime. And it was a beautiful place too. (laugh)

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Uh, working conditions were good. We had our, our safety committees uh, uh, you know, to watch after the safety. And they [inaudible]... company's good to provide us with safety equipment.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And, and all, it was set up really well that way.

Jennifer: Yeah. These safety committees, were they uh, like worker-management uh, alliances?

Ike: Well, the uh, the uh, social uh, I mean, the uh, safety committee director, he was salaried, but then he had a committee of hourly workers.

Jennifer: I see. That volunteered their time?

Ike: They had meetings. Yes, uh-huh, yeah. But they would take everything from their departments to a meeting and go over what was wrong. And you know, he would uh, try to get it uh, fixed up for

'em.

Jennifer: Hmm. That's, yeah, I've, I've heard about that too. I've heard some complaints though, about like uh, uh, the asbestos in the plant and um, some of the uh, I mean, so-, do you know anything about the uh,...

Ike: Oh yeah. We had...

Jennifer: ...I know you had it in there, a lot of it.

Ike: ...we had it, I'm sure. Or some of the material in the construction glass buildings...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...ones you didn't bother, that didn't uh, they didn't go on, they didn't get any air.

Jennifer: Yeah, right.

Ike: Any glass plant where you have compressed air operating machines...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...uh, you have a certain amount of, of air coming out...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...well, then see, when they make a bottle, it's compressed in, in the blank and in the mold. Well, then there's a certain amount of, of, of what they call silicate dust can come out of that. We had that, and it's just something you can't prevent.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But uh, where people worked uh, in, in, adjacent to uh, a job, they had respirators to wear and they had hearing aids and stuff like that. Um, in making, in making the uh, glass, you had silicate sand, you have to use that. It's very, uh, you know, hard on the lungs, it gets in there and you had feldspar and you had uh, many other things that uh, could cause problems.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But they tried to watch it.

Jennifer: Yeah. So it was a dangerous business...

Ike: We had people that had problems.



Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And then uh, here lately, uh, then we had X-rays. A lotta 'em coming under the uh, asbestos lung.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Uh, I worked in it for what we call uh, translight board, which is uh, am-, a-, asbestos board that we used in what we called our take-outs, used on our push-out pads and, and I machined 'em. Or a lotta of us in machine repair, and this dust was there.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And, and, uh, that uh, I know of no one in our department that had uh, a lung problem.

Jennifer: Hmm.

Ike: Now there have been some when they checked 'em,...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...um, have found certain things in, in the lungs.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: You know. And, and some of 'em have been paid a, a, a monetary award...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...for that, you know.

Jennifer: They've been compensated.

Ike: Yep, yep.

Jennifer: Yeah, I've heard about the, (cough) the masks that some of them uh, had to wear...

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: ...were made out of asbestos. So they were, you know...

Ike: Yeah, uh-huh.

Jennifer: ...I mean, I don't know much about it, you know.

Ike: See, years ago uh, uh, I mean, see everything was

[inaudible].

Jennifer: Right, right, yeah. What did you know.

Ike: (mumble) Anything. You had a, uh, a lotta your insulation and all that.

Jennifer: Right. In homes.

Ike: Like uh, uh 'round the hot, what we called the hot box on the [inaudible]...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...where the bottles go in to be [inaudible], you know.

Jennifer: Uh-huh. Right.

Ike: Uh, that was, had asbestos, and at the time, we didn't know, I couldn't tell.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And of course, sometimes you coughed, but that's 'bout all. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: We didn't know what impact, you know.

Jennifer: Well, sure. Sure, sure. It couldn't be called negligence of any kind.

Ike: No, no, no. They tried not to.

Jennifer: No.

Ike: But uh, it's like uh, any other kind industry uh, where you uh, are uh, have certain elements existing in the manufacture of a product, uh...

Jennifer: You can't escape it.

Ike: You can't a hunderd percent, you can't do it.

Jennifer: No. Just uh, band-aid measures, so-to-speak.

Ike: Yeah, I was uh, I was president of the union uh, down there for some time...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...and on union committees, and of course, the union on, on their part, uh, was a watchdog on safety and all that too, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Working conditions,...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...we had a good relationship.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: We had really.

Jennifer: Yeah. W-, wh-, what time period were you president of the union?

Ike: Pardon?

Jennifer: Uh, what, what years were you president of the union?

Ike: Uhhh, '6-, '66 through '70, somethin' like that. Then I was uh, on the uh, factory committee. That's the uh, the factory is divided into sections, and they have a factory committee in these areas to help the president of the union or to...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...[inaudible].

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, I was on that for many years.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Like a permanent position.

Ike: Mmm-hmm. Right.

Jennifer: So you were there during the 1969 strike?

Ike: Sure was.

Jennifer: Yeah. Could you tell me about that?

Ike: Sure, um...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...wha-, what happened, I'll give you a little background.

Jennifer: Okay. That's good.

Ike: [inaudible] Uh, um, this was not a strike against Owens-Illinois.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Okay.

Ike: It was a national situation.

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: Uh, what, the international union and Owens-Illinois at that time were trying to force the small glass companies especially in the south who were paying something like four or five dollars less per hour than Owens-Illinois was.

Jennifer: Mmm. Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Therefore, they were able to put their commodity, their glassware, out and undercut Owens-Illinois.

Jennifer: Right. Sure. Right.

Ike: So, what the international an-, Owens was trying to do in this strike was, uh, uh, uh, uh, was, the main cause of it was the fact that they were trying to force these companies to, a strike is an economic boy-, boycott.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: Exactly what it is.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Okay. So, we uh, in Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Lawrence Glass, and all over down through there, uh, they were trying to force them into go-, negotiating, and in the south, a union had a rough time. You (laugh), you had a rough time organizing and uh,...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: and, and all because they [inaudible]. But anyhow, out of this long strike, 51 days, 61 days, wasn't it, yeah. Uh, they were able to force most of those companies to bring, to bring their wages up.

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: But there again, it um, it didn't go well with us because we had to wait. We were the leaders in wages.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: We had to wait a while 'til they was forcing those people up. It didn't go well with us at the time. We knew what it was and what it was for, but uh, we were kinda standing still and...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...they were forcing...it was for economics.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Probably if they hadn't a got it, Owens woulda been downsized, you know...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...an-, an-, and production, we'd a lost jobs.

Jennifer: Yeah. Years and years ago.

Ike: B-, by getting these smaller companies uh, to come up to uh, near, not, not all the way, but up near what our wages were, they, then they were forcing them to charge more for their ware.

Jennifer: Right, right.

Ike: See. And uh, uh, so that safeguarded jobs indirectly.

Jennifer: Right. Indirectly. That's hard to do.

Ike: [inaudible] That's hard to explain to people.

Jennifer: Yes. It's hard to have an indirect strike. (laugh)

Ike: [inaudible]...those guys on there gettin' 22 cents an hour raise under this contract, and we're gettin' five.

Jennifer: Yes. And why that means they should be outside striking.

Ike: That's right. And they, but the objective there was, was to force them into uh, competitive uh, sales, you know.

Jennifer: So uh, so throughout the strike, relations were not uh, very strange between management and workers?

Ike: Oh no. No, we had nothing. Uh, well, uh, the only thing uh, we had what (laugh) what you would call a, a, a lock-in, a, of salaried people.

Jennifer: (laugh) Yeah. Right.

Ike: They were, they were locked in. They weren't really, but that's what we uh, (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: That's wha-, that's what, that was the main type of...

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: ...and they, they maintained the plant. We knew, not even, no production.

Jennifer: Right. Just keepin' things...alive.

Ike: See. But they were, an-, an-, and most uh, broad-minded people took it that way. Now, you had some radicals...

Jennifer: Mmmm.

Ike: ...on both sides, but...

Jennifer: Yeah. Oh yeah.

Ike: ...some of their people wanted to do this, and we, the officers of the union had a hard time keepin' 'em in uh, uh, control.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But we did.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: There's a few little incidents where, wasn't nice, but by and far, we had uh, nothing, I mean, no bad things.

Jennifer: What would you say that these radical people say on the union side, what were they uh, angry about? What were they, what, what were you having to control them about? What was their anger targeted at?

Ike: Well, of course, they were uh, they were uh, they were losing their paycheck. Number one.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Economics. Uh, the people in there working, especially your maintenance people, these salary people were doing work in there. I mean, they were painting and repairing which, which is upkeep, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah. Right. Sure.

Ike: And uh, the first two, three, four days of the strike, oh, we had people, boy, they's happy out there. Running cars.

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: Then when they missed the payday, that started to uh, bend. I mean, they were, (laugh) they were ready to go back, a lotta 'em, to work.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But, uh, really the feeling when we went back, I know of uh, uh, I know of very few incidents. We did have some uh, supervisors that were uh, you have that sometimes, you know, that uh, said some things and all, but it worked out very well.

Jennifer: That's remarkable.

Ike: We had a good plant manager. We had John Smathers. He was, and Burle Haridy uh, the personnel director, were two good thinking people. That helped a lot.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And then I think on the, on the leadership of our local union it, it, you know, it helped too.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: So uh, but we, we knew we had to go back.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: That's where our livelihood was. So we didn't want to destroy the plant.

Jennifer: Of course not.

Ike: No way.

Jennifer: No way.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah. No.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Never had that tone. Um, do you have a, uh, would you be able to name successive plant managers during your career?

Ike: Mmmm. Well, some of 'em.

Jennifer: Good. That'd be great.

Ike: Okay, we go back um, we go back uh, to uh, uh, uh, one that, when I went in in '41, we had Jim McBurney.

Jennifer: I'm gonna have to make you spell those. (laugh)

Ike: M-C-B-U-R-N-E-Y, Jim McBurney.

Jennifer: Okay.

Ike: And then, in 'bout 19 and uh, (whisper--Jim, '42, '43) '43, um, A.C. Budd came here from Alton, Illinois. He, he was a number one plant manager. (laugh)

Jennifer: Okay.

Ike: Um, he uh, he stayed uh, until uh, let me think, uh, um, 'til um, well anyhow, he stayed quite a while.

Jennifer: Right. The dates aren't important.

Ike: And then we had uh, uh, then we had Adams uh, what's his first name, Adams. I can't think of it. That was his last name.

Jennifer: Okay.

Ike: I'll come back to it. Uh, and then we had Carmen Curreria that came from Bridgeton here.

Jennifer: Came from where?

Ike: Bridgeton, New Jersey. The plant in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Jennifer: Is that C-A-R-R-E-R-A?

Ike: Carmen, C-A-R-M-E-N, C-U-R-R-E-R-I-A, Curreria.

Jennifer: Ahh. Okay.

Ike: Yeah, yeah, um, and Carmen, he, he was another good one. And then we had uh, uh, that was Dan Adams back there.

Jennifer: Ahh.

Ike: Okay. Um, then we had uh, uh, we had uh, John Smathers.

Jennifer: Okay.

IN BACKGROUND: DOG COUGHING



Ike: [inaudible] She does that.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Then we had (laugh)...

Jennifer: (laugh) That's okay. [inaudible]

Ike: Then we had uh, Schottle Corb now I can't...Schottle Corb.

Jennifer: Schottle Corb? With an...?

Ike: Corb, C-O-R, S-C-H-O-T-T-L-E, C-O-R-B, Schottle Corb.

Jennifer: B, all right.

Ike: Uh-huh. Corb, yeah, yeah. And then we had uh, Weir, W-E-I-R. Chuck, Charles Weir, Chuck. Then we had uh, then we had uh, (pause) uh, Terry Wilkinson. We had uh, (pause) [inaudible] (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: That gives you a fairly good uh, concept.

Jennifer: Yes. Yeah.

Ike: And then uh, we had uh, we had Jim uh, Jim, (pause)...

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: ...He's over at the, he's over uh, (pause)

Jennifer: Hmmm. Well, that's, that's, that's uh...

Ike: Pretty good, I guess?

Jennifer: That's pretty good. Yeah, it sure does. And, and do you know...

Ike: Uh, then uh, of course, we had uh, uh, Dennis Silvas was our last one. He's the one...you know, had to, had to close it down. You know, there's some plant managers that shine like anything else. And others you don't uh, and this uh, to start with, we had 'em stay a longer period of time.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Some-, sometimes, and in later years, we'd get for maybe a year, where you don't really uh, they don't really stand out like the ones that stay a long time.

Jennifer: Sure. Sure. Um, regarding the closing of the plant, do you think, regarding the closing of the plant...

Ike: Uh-huh.

Jennifer: ... uh, do you think uh, Silvas was sent in to close the plant uh, intentionally?

Ike: No, absolutely not.

Jennifer: Wha-, what are your uh, ideas about...the closing?

Ike: Well, what, what you um, what you have to um, realize is the fact that uh, plastic really took over. We lost job after job after job to plastic. We started downsizing the plant a number of years ago.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Downsizing the employee, number of employees.

Jennifer: What was that like the early '80s or uh?

Ike: Ohh, sure, yeah, uh-huh. Uh and uh, the, what we call the furnace, was shut down, and it would stay there. There was no way of starting it back up. And you, you uh, at one time, we had uh, five tanks running, you know, and then we went to four.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And then you went to three.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Then at the time they went to two, I couldn't see then myself how they could maintain an old plant of that size. It was a huge plant.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But on two, on two furnaces running.

Jennifer: Right, right.

Ike: And uh, again uh, it was uh, uh, shipping costs was a factor here. It has been a factor for many years. Well, it was when we had the rails, you know, the ware went by at one time, exclusively by uh, rail.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: And it was high. That was another, even back when it was

running good. Then, you know, trucks. But here, um, it was still high because the fact, and a lotta your uh, plants adjacent to a large city, a truck would bring in a load and take a load of bottles out. Therefore, you had what you called a two-ended uh, operation.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: See, and they weren't losing all, so the rates were cheaper for O-I. But here we didn't have that. It was one way. A truck had to come either empty and then haul the ware out. Owens had to pay a higher rate...

Jennifer: Yes they...because they couldn't combine the two.

Ike: That's right. They didn't bring anything in. They had...and that truck was on the road all that time coming.

Jennifer: Nothin'.

Ike: Yeah. But all those factors, know, the people argue and I talked to him and, and uh, and, and, citing the uh, background here at Huntington.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: See, we, we shut a plant down at Charleston, we shut a plant down in Fairmont. Our plant was continually being downsized.

Jennifer: Mmm. Yes, Yeah. [inaudible] years...

Ike: You reach a point, in my thinking, where should we operate or not? And...

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: ...Toledo said no. You know, so I...Dennis Silvas was, I don't think had anything to do with it all, personally.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And, and...

Jennifer: Do, do you think he knew it was comin'? Do you think he knew it was comin'? Do you think they sent him here to save the plant or to just watch it for a while because they...?

Ike: I, I don't think he uh, had uh, he realized like everybody else that uh, when he first came here uh, talked to 'im, and he expressed the fact that uh, he hoped that it'd never uh, come to be. But uh, Huntington was in a bad situation. But we were knowin' that under oth-, other plant managers also.

Jennifer: Mmm. Mmm-hmm.

Ike: In fact, when I went to work there uh, we had three plants operating in West Virginia...

Jennifer: Uh-huh. Right.

Ike: ...an-, and uh, uh, Charleston went down uh, they, they would use...

Jennifer: That was a huge plant.

Ike: ...they would use that veiled threat, "If you people don't pick up productivity here, you can go the way of Charleston." You know,...

Jennifer: For decades, they must've used that. I know that happened a long time ago.

Ike: Is that right?

Jennifer: That happ-, tha-, when did they close down the Charleston plant...in like...I mean...?

Ike: Uhh, about the time of uh, 'bout the time we started taking out the Owens machines which was '49, '52 somethin' like that. In that area.

Jennifer: Yeah. So that was a long-standing threat?

Ike: [inaudible] It was in the '50s.

Jennifer: '50s.

Ike: 'Cause I used to go to a uh, state labor convention, and they was still people from the Charleston plant, and we would meet in Charleston [inaudible] so it was in the '50s.

Jennifer: Did that Charleston plant produce bottles of was that a window glass place?

Ike: No, see you had on uh, in Kanawha City,...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...on either side of the road, you had a glass plant. On this side it was Libby Owens plate glass. They made window panes. That was Libby Owens. W. Owens fourth. On the other side, you had the Owens-Illinois container plant made the bottles.

IN BACKGROUND: DOG WHEEZING

Jennifer: Side-by-side.

Ike: Yep. Yep.

Jennifer: Interesting. (laugh) I've heard that was one of the largest ever. (laugh) One of the largest of the Owens plants.

Ike: Charleston?

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: The, you mean, the bott-, the container plant?

Jennifer: Is it, was it a large one? Was it larger than Huntington?

Ike: No.

Jennifer: No? Huh.

Ike: Uh, they had all Owens machines. Now, we, let me go back now. I forgot that a while ago. We were lucky here when they uh, the Owens machine wa-, was a huge cost factor. Made good ware on most, uh, most of the bottles they made. But some, they could not, they did not have the variety uh, of operations that you did on the I-S machines, so therefore, that's why the Owens went out. Costly building an-, and they didn't have the uh, variety of uh, couldn't make a variety of bottles that the I-S machine...

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: But Charleston had all the Owens machines and they shut down.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: We were lucky in Huntington in '49 that they started to take the Owens out, but they replaced them with the forming...[inaudible]...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And at that time, when we had 34 machines, Huntington was the largest flow-forming plant.

Jennifer: In?

Ike: In, in, i-, everywhere.

Jennifer: Everywhere. (laugh) Wow. So th-, those uh,...

Ike: But mo-, most of your other plants, Alton and Bridgeton still

operated, Owens and flow-forming machines.

Jennifer: Right. Right.

Ike: See.

Jennifer: So you were completely free of the Owens machines before...[inaudible]...anybody else?

Ike: That's right. So Bridgeton shut down, and Alton shut down 'fore we did. [inaudible] Illinois is still operating.

Jennifer: How did you uh, how did you learn about these, these great big new machines? I mean, here you are in the machinist shop, and they're introducing these, these new machines. How did they train you on the, like the new machines?

Ike: Well, um, back in '41, the, the, the I-S machine wa-, was uh, rather a new machine...

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: ...and uh, um, we, we learned on a four-section I-S which is slow-operating machine and all.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And then we, of course, over a period of time, they would hold seminars uh, in the machine repair on these new uh, machines coming in, new parts, new, you know, and people from the, see, we had a tech center in Toledo.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Owens Technical Center. Well, they would come in with these new operations, and uh,...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...have a seminar on, show us how to uh, how they work and... [inaudible]...parts and machines and all. And they had, they had a good training program. And they also trained, of course, like on the forming end. The operators, they had to have training sessions all the time for them.

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: 'Cause they was changing out there too.

Jennifer: Yes, yes. Yeah, I've heard about how they took people to different plants, you know, to go observe...

Ike: Yeah. See um...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...um, have you ever been in a glass plant?

Jennifer: No, I haven't.

Ike: No. Okay. It was quite a thing. The operators operated those machines, they were there. They had to be there every, every minute, you know. And 'cause they had to swab, they had to...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: just operations in the blanks and molds and everything.

Jennifer: Sure, sure.

Ike: And uh, they were right in that heat and smoke eight hours a day (laugh). We, uh, we would go down on repair work, if one broke down or something, but we weren't like the operators.

Jennifer: Yeah, sure.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah. Now, was it cooler in the machine shop? (laugh)

Ike: Oh yeah. Yeah. We had a big fans. It wa-, in the summertime, it'd mix the hot air up...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...and it was that much movement, you know.

Jennifer: Sure. Yeah.

Ike: And uh, we didn't have the uh, the heat, we didn't...

IN BACKGROUND: DOG BARKING

Ike: ...have the noise factor. We didn't have the fumes that those people in the forming department worked in.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: See, they had all that 'cause [inaudible] as I said while ago, when you swab a machine, you have certain uh, mixtures there that you use that has uh, uh, different things in it that, that you're breathing, you know, those fumes outta that mixture. It keeps your bottle from sticking to the metal and the mold and the blank.

Jennifer: So swabbing is just like putting some kind of fluid cleaning...?

Ike: Well, you had, actually, you have a swab made out of something like a mop and you have your can of swab material over here, and you go down each, each one of those molds and blanks, you have to kinda cross there ever so often...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...and what they call hit 'em with that...

Jennifer: Swabbing.

Ike: ...swab. Yeah, because that uh, see if you don't, then first thing you know, you got blisters uh, and all that in their glass.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: [inaudible]...stick to the metal or something.

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: So they throw them away out front.

Jennifer: Ahh. Wow.

Ike: Those guys are on an incentive program, made good money on...[inaudible]

Jennifer: Oh. You mean, the more did, the...

Ike: The better the ware, the more they made. You know. The more...

Jennifer: Oh, they were on an incentive program?

Ike: Oh yeah.

Jennifer: Well, I didn't know that.

Ike: Forming department was on, their bonus was, we never did have a bonus they had.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But I never want to do their job either, but um, uh, sometimes their bonus would equal their hours on, in payment, you know what I mean?

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.



Ike: They made uh, they made good money.

Jennifer: Yeah. That's an incentive all right.

Ike: Better the job, the more money you made.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: You know. Yeah, it was incentive to do good work.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, consistent work.

Ike: [inaudible] Now, that, that is a direct, that is a direct uh, production bonus out there. So many units uh, per hour, you wanna, you get a measurement on it, see?

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, we did have a bonus set up throughout the plant uh, like in the machine repair, the mold shop, the maintenance, but there was no, there was no way to measure the production you were doing.

Jennifer: Yeah, right.

Ike: But you don't, you weren't producing units per hour.

Jennifer: The same kinda thing all the time.

Ike: That's right. You measured, yeah. So um, when I was president, uh, we met in Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, and had a, had a what we called a bonus buy-out in our non-production departments.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: That was in machine repair, maintenance, uh, corrugated, uh, shipping and selecting.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Because there was no way, there's no way of measuring the output of these people's work.

Jennifer: Right, right.

Ike: See what I mean? No direct. So...

Jennifer: So...

Ike: ...we were always, we were always uh, consumed in meeting after meeting, why didn't I get my bonus?

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: Why did they take my bonus? Well, you had nothing, any measurement to base it on.

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: And the company could more or less give what they wanted to. There's no way of saying, you know, they were, they were wrong.

Jennifer: Yeah. (laugh) So you gotta...arbitrary, is that what you're saying?

Ike: But we, we bought it out. Yeah, in our non-production department, we had...[inaudible]

Jennifer: Right, right.

Ike: But it was based on different things that uh, there was no measurement of.

Jennifer: Oh, I see.

Ike: Uh, forming department had direct production bonuses.

Jennifer: Wha-, what other departments had that kind of...?

Ike: Uh, direct production, that the only one.

Jennifer: That was it. The forming department.

Ike: Really their the only ones producing...

Jennifer: That could make a difference.

Ike: ...units per hour.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: The bottles per hour.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah, that would work. (laugh) (cough)

Ike: We had a buy-out, we got so much on the hour.

Jennifer: Now what does that mean, you had a buy-out?

Ike: Well, what they refer to uh...

END OF TAPE 5, SIDE 1

Ike: But uh, see, say I's making uh, uh, five bucks an hour,...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...and uh, I was getting what they called 10 percent base bonus.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, we went to this meeting, and we were able to uh, get a figure and add that to our five dollars uh, uh, an hour based rates, see.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Perpetually.

Ike: Yeah, and you got it on uh, every hour you worked.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: So really it was better for non-production workers.

Jennifer: Yeah. Then it stopped the, the bickering. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. And it cut out all that...

Jennifer: Yes, yes.

Ike: And then they uh, they had uh, industrial engineers. That used to be a big job. It was salaried job, and they called 'em industrial engineers. They took time-study on all jobs, you know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And there again, in the forming department, they could get a direct uh, figure on, on models produced per hour. In your other departments, you had a time-study man, and he would, he would time-study you on many things on your job. But then again, he couldn't get a direct production figure on it.

Jennifer: Right, because ultimately it, your job was based on what they were doing in the forming department.

Ike: Oh yeah.

Jennifer: And how fast they were...

Ike: Yeah, we were just actually an upkeep department. You know, to keep them running...

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: ...24 hours a day.

Jennifer: Who made the most money in the plant in terms of the workers?

Ike: Operators.

Jennifer: Operators.

Ike: The machine operators, hourly workers now,...

Jennifer: Yeah right.

Ike: ...uh, machine operators on the forming line.

Jennifer: Yeah, I guess so.

Ike: Now uh, that included the bonus take-home pay...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...we made, n-, the mold makers, the mold shop, see, they had a different union.

Jennifer: Union, yeah.

Ike: Mold makers were one union and we were another.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Uh, and the operators were another. I mean, but the mold makers were not in our uh, glass bottle blower...

Jennifer: Right. Right. They came from the...

Ike: The mold, the mold makers had one of the oldest unions in the country, in the country.

Jennifer: Yeah, I did some research on this on this...

Ike: And it was one of the best. I mean, but they were all skilled artisans.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Mold makers, everyone in there was a skilled man.

Jennifer: More like the older type of glass making.

Ike: That's right. Well, uh, mostly here at Huntington, mostly

they did mostly repairs.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: The big uh, mold uh, plant in Alton, Illinois made the molds.

Jennifer: Uh-huh. So they were just [inaudible]

Ike: Yeah, and they, mostly in the Huntington area. They made some, but very few. Most of 'em [inaudible]....then machine repair would be second.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: And uh, uh, maintenance.

Jennifer: Yep.

Ike: While I was president, we negotiated a skilled rate for, we didn't have a, a, uh, apprenticeship program up to the time, you know, I was president. And uh, so we were able to negotiate a apprenticeship program. In turn, we would supply the company with skilled employees. The-, the-, they would sign up and go to trade school for their learnin'.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: On their trade. Uh, for so much an hour extry, each contract, until we got our skilled people up in the uh, price range or say the nickel plant, steel workers. Steel workers are the highest paid.

Jennifer: Sure. Sure. Tightest union...

Ike: We, we on a, each, each contract we would get so much above the normal contract for skilled.

Jennifer: Uh-huh. So you kept creeping it up...

Ike: So we finally got uh, our people in an apprenticeship. It was a good training program for machine, uh, machine repair maintenance.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Those are the only two departments that uh, was in the uh, was in the apprenticeship program.

Jennifer: An-, and this was your uh, this was your program, this was your project you spearheaded this project?

Ike: [inaudible] years before we put it in. I, I met with uh, the

skilled uh, people from the other Owens plants outside of the regular meeting we were in, we'd meet at night to talk on getting this apprenticeship program.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. So this was nationwide? This was all plants that you're talking about?

Ike: Yeah, mmm-hmm.

Jennifer: That's wonderful.

Ike: We were, see uh, we had what you called a P-and-M union. P-and-M is production and maintenance.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: The production people outnumber the maintenance people like uh, 40-to-1.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, when you're a minority in anything, you don't have the voting power, so we had to work outside of the regular union meetings to set this apprenticeship program up.

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: For the skilled people.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: And we got it.

Jennifer: Hmmm. Wow. Gettin' a lotta stuff here. This is great. (laugh) Um, I'm interested in like uh, like what happened to the plant like, you started 1941, like during World War II. I mean, did uh, during the war, did like the make-up of the labor force change? Did you have uh, uh, what, what changes occurred at the plant as a result of the war? Are there any that you can...

Ike: In the war?

Jennifer: ...during the war, World War II?

Ike: We did war work. We did...

Jennifer: War work?

Ike: In machine repair, uh, we got what they called gear blanks for the uh, uh, tanks and guns and everything, and we would uh, we would machine these out and ship 'em to a, a armament plant

somewhere. So indirectly, we, they, they would uh, ship the blanks in, unfinished, you know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Then we would finish them up to what they wanted. Then they would take it to an ordinance plant somewhere and finish whatever they wanted on it. We did a lotta that.

Jennifer: Yeah. Now were you compensated for that of the full amount? Were you paid for that? I mean, did you make money from that or was that just...?

Ike: Did the company pay for it?

Jennifer: Uh-huh. I mean, did the, did they make money?

Ike: Oh, the company. Well, yeah, they, they had a set rate that they would produce these for the, the, the government plants, you know.

Jennifer: So it wasn't like doing it for the good of the country or whatever? They weren't...

Ike: Well, we, we felt it was.

Jennifer: Yeah, but I mean, ... Yeah.

Ike: Yeah. Indirectly, yeah, sure. Uh, we felt, we're doing this to help.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Aside from keeping the glass plant running...

Jennifer: Open and running.

Ike: ...the machine shop was doing its extra work and we felt well, we're doing something in the effort. Back at that time, it was pretty uh, pretty high class to be in the war efforts, you know.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: You felt you were doing...

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: ...[inaudible]...I, I did a lotta that back then.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And uh, uh, so we, that's the only thing. It was not a, it was not a deferment class, we didn't get deferred, because of it 'cause we were indirectly into the war efforts, you know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm, mmm-hmm.

Ike: We finally, I finally had to go in, in the army. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh) Where did you serve? Where did you serve?

Ike: Uh, '43 to '46. In the, went over in the Pacific area.

Jennifer: Ahh, you go the Pacific arena then?

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Hmmm. I have a lotta questions about World War II that don't have to do anything with glass, so I'll have to (laugh) [inaudible] Um, hmmm, um, something I'd like to ask you specifically uh, like uh, so you didn't do shift work?

Ike: What?

Jennifer: Uh, you didn't do shift work at all?

Ike: No, well, I did just a little bit in '48, but uh, there wasn't...[inaudible]. We had a great big shutdown in 1948, one of the biggest cutbacks we had. It was leading up to this...

Jennifer: [inaudible]

Ike: ...We had a strike in '64 nationwide, and we had a strike in '69.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Un-, an-, and uh '48, i-, i-, it uh, was still competitive, an-, an-, and uh, we went down uh, to uh, uh, about uh, let's see, we shut one uh, Owens tank and shut down flow tank, and uh, there was uh, an economic tanking over something, I don't remember exactly what it was. '4-, '48, it was one of the uh, as close as I ever got to being laid off.

Jennifer: Hmmm. Hmmm.

Ike: So, I had to go to the electronic gauging shop and work shift for just a few months. I'd forgotten that.

Jennifer: You worked there?

Ike: I had to work, yeah, electronic gauging, where they gauged the bottles, you know, electronically.



Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: Yeah, i-, it was part of the machine repair department.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: But it was located in the selecting area. Take care of all the uh, gauging of bottles and all.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. So that um, like a feedback process.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Like making sure... 'cause selecting was like looking for defects in the bottles? I mean, that's what that selecting...?

Ike: Oh yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah, and uh, what they could do uh, before it was all uh, uh, gauged, what we call gauging, they'd use a gauge on the finish on the bottle. Be sure it was right dimensions, you know, round not outta round, and to put a cap on it, you know.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: This was all done by hand on the layer which was very difficult job, and then they perfected the automatic gauging machine.

Jennifer: I see.

Ike: And you would run 'em through on a conveyor, and this gauging machine would gauge 'em and throw the bad ones out.

Jennifer: So that did away with selecting jobs?

Ike: Pardon?

Jennifer: Did that do away with selecting, the selecting jobs?

Ike: No, no. It really didn't uh, uh, it was, again the, the main focus there on the layer then was to pack...

Jennifer: Oh I see.

Ike: ...bottles, and, and uh, it lessened the impact of what you had to look for and everything.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Well, then we, then they, then we got a uh, improvement in the uh, gauging machine. Uh, they put a 'lectronic eye that was

able to go through and pick out the defects in, in the bottles.

Jennifer: Uh-huh. Quickly? How quickly did it take each bottle, I mean, how long did it take to, say, check each bottle?

Ike: Oh it would spin around just uh, just um, maybe half a minute or something like that.

Jennifer: Wow.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Did you check every bottle or was it just...?

Ike: Yes, yes. It'd come down the conveyor on, on...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...and go in this gauging head, they called it.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: And uh, you would check every one for uh, the gauging, on the uh, uh, defects...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...split finish, all that stuff.

Jennifer: That's amazing.

Ike: Yeah. And at that time, we had uh, it was after the war, the baby boom, and we had about eight or nine machines just on baby food bottles, jars.

Jennifer: [inaudible]

Ike: [inaudible]...Yeah, Gerber's, all those.

Jennifer: Yeah, I bet.

Ike: Baby food was a big thing for quite a while.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, huge, massive increase in...

Ike: Oh, that's right. Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: All that, all those industries.

Ike: Yep.

Jennifer: Hmmm. Ye-, I've heard that the uh, production, the

different, what the plant produced in terms of the variety uh, decreased by the time of the uh, by the time it closed. I mean, I been told that the plant produced like Avon bottles and, and really intricate uh, work.

Ike: Looking back, um, Avon, have, have you seen some of those...

Jennifer: Yeah, sure.

Ike: ...the different things? We made all designs of that, you know. It was a big thing. We'd have maybe three or four Avon machines...Avon.

Jennifer: Avon machines?

Ike: Well, made ware, made bot-, the containers for Avon products.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And then, uh, they would dress it up with certain things, you know, uh, plastic uh, hats or whatever they were making, you know. They made everything, little automobiles...

Jennifer: Did you make the plastics? Did you...

Ike: No.

Jennifer: No. You just set the finished bottle.

Ike: Just the bottle, uh-huh.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: And uh, then uh, decanters, whiskey decanters, all those beautiful decanters. We, we made those down there for years.

Jennifer: And the lids and everything?

Ike: The, the beautiful, yeah, we made uh, uh, one uh, you see it here now uh, uh, it's the uh, it has a bent neck on it.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Oh.

Ike: It was, it was a beautiful thing. We made it, and all other. In fact, everybody that worked down there got a few decanters in their house. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh) I'll bet.

Ike: You know, they, they weren't too strict. They let bring a decanter home.

Jennifer: Oh really? They'd let you take stuff home?

Ike: Yeah. But the variety uh, through the years, it was something. What we made down...penicillin. Three, three cc penicillin, uh, five cc penicillin, little penicillin bottles.

Jennifer: Oh, little vials.

Ike: Yeah, little vials. Uh-huh, yeah, we made those, those girls'd have to handle those things and pack 'em, you know, and pick out defects. It was, it was a...

Jennifer: Oh my...goodness.

Ike: ...terrible job.

Jennifer: Oh my goodness. I'm sure. How do you pack things that size?

Ike: But you know, uh...

Jennifer: Millions of them.

Ike: ...the thing, the thing that I, that I really...Are you runnin' out?

Jennifer: No. Just checkin'. I'm just, no, I'm just checking the level...

Ike: Are you ready to quit? (laugh)

Jennifer: No. No, no, no, not at all.

Ike: What, what I really, what I remember and respect is, is the women that worked shift work.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: On a high-stress job. Selecting ware is high-stress.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: You make mistakes, and it goes to customers, and boy, you get, you know, you're in for it.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah.

Ike: That's bad. So those women that, the ones, \_\_\_\_\_, a lot of our women down there were through death or divorced their husbands or something, worked down there shift work, high-stress work and raised a family.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: I mean, it's remarkable.

Jennifer: It, it is. Yeah, on that rotating shift, I mean, how did they take care of their children?

Ike: [inaudible]...That's right. I mean, you know, looking back, I know, I knew a lotta of 'em, and they worked day in and day out like that. And raised a family.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ike: Shift, shift jobs too.

Jennifer: That's amazing. Um, I know that women were concentrated almost exclusively in the selecting department for a long time.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Um, what was it like when uh, women started getting other jobs like within the plant...?

Ike: Oh yeah.

Jennifer: What was that like?

Ike: Well, le-, let me give you a little insight on it. You have time on that?

Jennifer: Yes, all the time in the world. (laugh)

Ike: Okay, okay. Um, when um, see uh, down at Owens back before, before World War II, um, we did not have a local in the production or the maintenance uh, un-, local down there. We had the uh, we had the forming local and mold makers.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Rest of the plant was not union.

Jennifer: (cough) So it was just, okay. Mmm-hmm.

Ike: So, the, the i-, irony of it is that when they came in here during uh, well, I was in service when they brought the union in. There was not a union when I hired in.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. So you came back to it.

Ike: And the P-and-M there, you know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Uh, so when I came back, they had a union. [inaudible] But the policy was they felt a male local and female local. Why they...I don't know.

Jennifer: You have no idea why.

Ike: I do not know. Somebody in, 'cause I wasn't there said that.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: International had to be in on it.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Or they wouldn't give you a charter.

Jennifer: They wouldn't approve it. Right, right.

Ike: But why, why they ever did it, and that caused more trouble in Huntington plant than anything we had. Male versus female.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And, and fighting, you know. 'Course I was out in machine repair, I, I wasn't part of that selecting department and all, you know, where they had the [inaudible].

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: But uh, the women were not treated fairly, uh, until EEOC came along, you know, and forced the issue, but they were not treated fairly on moving up into jobs, good paying jobs in the selecting department.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Uh, and uh, they, they had to stay right on the layer and pack bottles.

Jennifer: And that was it. And that was their...

Ike: [inaudible] That's the lowest paying job outside of the uh, sweeper, they call 'im, you know, the janitor. But uh, they were not allowed to move up to a, a uh, quality inspector or a crew leader or any of the higher paying jobs. I, I never did think it was fair, but there wasn't anything, you know, set up that way. Well, um, after we started getting into the EEOC part, you know, the fair employment thing, um, women starting fighting for the jobs. And they started getting them, yeah, they were right. But the fallacy of it was they, they, those women be there as 30 years, and

here come a little ole guy in there, young guy, and boy, he'd work as a lahr attendant for a while and then he could move up to, to the better jobs.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. And they're stuck.

Ike: And move right around these women.

Jennifer: Yes, yeah.

Ike: And uh, it created and I don't uh, I don't blame 'em.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: 'Cause they should.

Jennifer: So they had all male supervisors...pretty much?

Ike: Oh yeah.

Jennifer: That had been working there a lot less than...?

Ike: Oh yeah, sure. Quality job, what they called quality, they, uh, quality man go around and after they uh, the women would pack 'em, they'd select certain boxes of bottles and give 'em a quality check, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah, right.

Ike: And the crew leaders led the certain section or, or the shift foreman...

Jennifer: For that matter.

Ike: Oh yeah. They didn't get those either. But then uh, we, we came around where they had the EEOC come in. But then they, they demanded and they were right in doing it.

Jennifer: Yeah. Sure.

Ike: And uh, for a long time, uh, the men would say, would want to know why they couldn't be a, a selector. You know, selecting bottles. The company, uh, said uh, the women had more manual dexterity.

Jennifer: Yes, yes, that was the line...yes, yes.

Ike: That's right. And so the men were kept off the selectors job and...

Jennifer: But they could fix machines, they could fix, you know,

the tiny little uh, component parts.

Ike: Yes. That was one of their comebacks to uh, the women [inaudible].

Jennifer: Yeah, right.

Ike: Well, the company maintained for a long time that the uh, women had more manual dexterity than...(laugh)

Jennifer: A "useful fiction"!

Ike: Yep. They did that. So uh, anyway, uh, it finally came around, I remember when they put the first quality women on there. Oh, those men were really, you know...

Jennifer: (laugh) Yeah.

Ike: ...hard to hold. And uh, every time they'd do something. Well, finally, they worked in, it worked out well. The men went on the layers too.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah. It worked both ways.

Ike: [inaudible] It worked both ways.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Yeah, so uh, but we had more friction if they'd never had that...

Jennifer: That division.

Ike: ...yeah, division, we wouldn't a had any. Well, in fact uh, as, as union representatives, we would go to a, a union convention or something, you know, and in fact, went to California one time, and...

Jennifer: Wow. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) So anyhow, we'd go there and here come the men and women from Bridgeton, the men, women from Streeter, the men and they would be there...

Jennifer: Together.

Ike: ...together fighting the issue.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Not fighting each other.



Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Here we'd go an-, an-, and we had women haters and we had some women who were man haters.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: Now...[inaudible]...true.

Jennifer: No, no, I understand.

Ike: And we'd go there and, and...terrible.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, it musta sounded awful, I mean, you must not have gotten much done.

Ike: Yeah, they would look at each other and...

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: I, I, I nev-, I didn't like it from the start of it, but that's the way thing's set up.

Jennifer: How did um, how did it uh, they were eventually combined?

Ike: Yes, they were.

Jennifer: And, and how did that finally happen? Who finally uh, how was that process uh, accomplished?

Ike: Well,...

Jennifer: Were they told to do that?

Ike: ...the, the, the, the, the government forced the issue more or less.

Jennifer: Oh, I guess so.

Ike: You know...[inaudible]...Then the international came in...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...and they, they, and we had a, we had a time down there.

Jennifer: 'Cause they didn't want to combine? Was there, was there a lotta sentiment against combining?

Ike: We had, we had a lotta men, a lotta women did not want to go into the same local...

Jennifer: Oh.

Ike: ...union. Uhh, international just said it has to be by certain date and, and, and, and it was. And it's worked out, it worked out well.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: We had the women, the men...[inaudible]...it worked out. That's the way it shoulda been for 40 years.

Jennifer: Now I-, I'd like to find out why that began that way. I'd like to find out why it began...

Ike: Well, really, I really don't know. Somebody, somebody, and I don't know who it was, but I was not here when it was uh, the locals were set up.

Jennifer: Yeah. I'll find out.

Ike: Yeah. Somebody knows.

Jennifer: Yeah, somebody's gonna know. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah, um, that was about uh, uh, '43, '44, that was when they were organizing. See, they uh, it was back, see one time you had the A, uh, AF of L and CIO. They were two separate unions uh, and really fought each other. Well, the CIO would try and come in down here.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: We had some people worked here that were new people in the CIO that were steel workers and all. Well, they were trying to get the CIO in. Well, then the international, of course, was a A, uh, AF of L union. The glass bottle blowers belonged to the AFL.

Jennifer: Yeah, I guess so.

Ike: Well, they, they came in and put this thing in. Still, I don't know why they did that male-female...[inaudible].

Jennifer: Well, maybe we can get back to you on that. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. Maybe you can, maybe you can find that out. Somebody knows.

Jennifer: Somebody knows. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. Yeah.

Jennifer: Somebody knows. Um, well, going from uh, gender to uh,

race, uh, what was their, when uh, black people began to be hired into the plant like uh, in the beginning with the EEOC. Uh, was that problematic? Was there any uh, tension or strain?

Ike: It wa-, it was uh, it was a problem.

Jennifer: Was it?

Ike: Yeah. Um, we had one uh, Afro-American um, there when I, uh, he was a janitor. That's the only one we had for years.

Jennifer: And that was before...?

Ike: Before EEOC...[inaudible]. Well, then he, he retired and uh, let's see, we had uh, we didn't have any more until this thing started uh, you know, and we had the reverend, um, the black minister used to come down to personnel and um, raise the dickens, you know, which he was right, you know. You can't deny that.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Uh, and uh, then uh, the company issued certain orders that they would include 'em, you know, in hiring.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: But it was always a um, a minor number, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And now, in all fairness, we hired a lotta of 'em that did not last, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah. For one reason or another.

Ike: Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah. Uh-huh. That uh, uh, they was not a lot of opposition in the work force actually, you know. They accept 'em and some stayed there for years.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Some of 'em, some of 'em they put in the hot forming department. They would not, they didn't want to work there.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: You know and so, it was one of things. Conditions did exist.

Jennifer: Yeah. Sure. Can't get away from that.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Can't make glass without heat. (laugh)

Ike: That's right.

Jennifer: When they discover that then, I mean, that's what plastic is, probably.

Ike: Yeah, but um, uh, that's uh, uh, the ones that stayed there made, made good workers.

Jennifer: That's...the tensions. It was not that high of a, a tension. Smoothest transition.

Ike: Yep, yep.

Jennifer: Um, what do you know about the Opal Mann suit? What do you know about effective class regulations? Have you heard that phrase before?

Ike: Oh sure. We went through effective class.

Jennifer: Could you explain that? I don't understand.

Ike: Well, actually, it come in on this uh, two-man, man uh, male-female local. Locals, individual locals.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And hers was basic that she was not able to move from a, a selector to one of the better paying jobs.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm. So that's what we've been talking about?

Ike: Basically, that's right. Yeah, that really. An-, and they gave it the effective class, and uh, Owens uh, at that time, uh, were a little dubious about making 'at big change. You know what I mean?

Jennifer: Mmm. Yeah, sure.

Ike: And they denied her the right.

Jennifer: To make a bid on that higher job, right.

Ike: Yeah, would not allow them to...See, in our male local, we had bidding all the way through.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: But the females were, were only...

Jennifer: [inaudible]

Ike: ...in the selecting department.

Jennifer: Sure, sure.

Ike: And then they were not allowed to actually, well, they could bid, but they were never given the job, but uh, in the selecting department.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Yeah. We got all plant bidding in our, all the other departments. You could go from one department to the other on a bid.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: Uh, most of it was based on seniority.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: They, of course, you know, they had uh, seniority and ability. Well, uh, seniority is black and white. You got 30 years...Ability, they could, I don't say mani-, manipulate, but they could use ability very flexible. Uh, when I say they, I say the company.

Jennifer: Yes, yes.

Ike: You know, individual supervisors and so forth.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: So uh, uh, we always maintained in the union that uh, uh, our, our seniority was there. We wanted our older people given a chance to better themselves on their job.

Jennifer: Yeah, sure.

Ike: And so you could uh, we battled that several times too.

Jennifer: What kind of a ability, how did they test, what was the criteria for ability? Was there a test of some sort?

Ike: They, they gave, they wanted to give a test. They give a test. We, we never did recognize their test.

Jennifer: Oh really. (laugh)

Ike: (laugh) That's right because they had, we do know that there

was ways people receiving information...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...you know, and, and, and...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...yeah, right. So uh, the uh, in the union, we said no, we can't, we don't want that. We'll take it on the number of years...

Jennifer: And that's it.

Ike: ...and that first went on, uh, the big thing was giving a senior person a chance.

Jennifer: Yes. If he couldn't do it, then he couldn't do it.

Ike: That's right. That's right. If they could prove that, then okay. And that's happened.

Jennifer: Yeah. Sure.

Ike: [inaudible]

Jennifer: But there should be that chance. Yeah. That's important.

Ike: Yeah. It sure is. Yeah. But um, we had, we had good um, really, from the standpoint of relations between company and union, we had pretty good, pretty good record.

Jennifer: Did the union get more uh, did it grow in strength toward the later years, when the production, when it was sized down? Or did it, did it size down with the company? Did union feelings increase or decrease?

Ike: Well, union membership, of course, goes up and down...[inaudible]...yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah, but uh...

Ike: Yeah, it, it uh, as the company downsized, the local union downsized.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: The number of people in the union.

Jennifer: Right, right. But were there, were they more or less active, the people that were in the union? Or did they, you know, ...?

Ike: Well, uh,...

Jennifer: (cough)

Ike: ...we never, I think they have this in all maybe more in some than others, but you don't have total participation.

Jennifer: Yeah. Even if you're supposed to...

Ike: You don't have near total participation. And of course, like any cross-section, you have people that are pro and con on the union.

Jennifer: Yeah. Right. Sure.

Ike: And it has its good points and bad points. You can't, you know.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: You can't say we're all right, and there's no way. But uh, no we, people, people would not take part in meetings, union meetings, and tha-, that's their right.

Jennifer: Yeah, sure.

Ike: An-, you go away to a wage conference and bring back the goodies that you, you negotiated,...

Jennifer: Won.

Ike: ...for 'em, they wouldn't even come out, lotta 'em wouldn't come out to a meeting to hear.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But if something came up where they needed help, here they would come, which was their right also.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: We accepted that.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: An-, and just like on retirement, uh, even today, I get phone calls from people who do not know what, how much insurance they got or what uh, retired benefits are and somethin' like 'at. Which again, I'm glad to...

Jennifer: Help 'em out.

Ike: That's right. Sure. And then we have a retiree uh, group, or club.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: We have a hundred and some people in it. It's very active. At each meeting, we take up the things that affect our people: Medicare, pension, uh, retiree benefits, uh. We, we help 'em.

Jennifer: That's wonderful.

Ike: Anybody had trouble collecting on a doctor bill, why, we get with...[inaudible]...(laugh)

Jennifer: Get somethin' done. That's wonderful.

Ike: Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: Um, I heard a, about a, a large sum a money that's been given for retraining to the people that have been laid off. Do you know about that money?

Ike: Do I what?

Jennifer: Do you know about any uh, uh, a large amount a money that's been given to uh, laid-off workers for retraining for continuing educa-?

Ike: Oh yeah. Uh-huh.

Jennifer: Where did that money come from?

Ike: It's coming, it's a government program.

Jennifer: It's a government program.

Ike: A retraining program under, yeah, right, on a, you have, you have uh, on, on a, uh, what one factor and this can't be because of uh, a form uh, input, you know, coming in. That really didn't cause this lay-off. [inaudible], now there's some bottles coming in from Japan, Mexico and some places like that, but not, not that large. But on, an, an one um, one uh, Senate bill, they allocated in this bill, they allocate so much on a, a, industries that's closed down for retraining programs so those people can go out and get jobs. Different, different occupations, vocations.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: And, and, and they'll train. Well, they're going into this now. And they will be paid uh, while they're in training. The government will pay for their training.



Jennifer: Oh. Yeah. Huh.

Ike: So it, it's, it's a good thing.

Jennifer: Yeah, it is.

Ike: And I'd...they had a meeting the other day, the, the union, local, and called people in. I don't know how many was there.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: But that was...getting in to sign up...for this program.

Jennifer: Yeah, a lotta money waitin'.

Ike: Yeah. Then they, course, they got severance pay on, based on the amount of years of service.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: That the company gave 'em...

Jennifer: But they didn't, but you don't get a pension unless you've retired for after 30 years, right? Is that correct?

Ike: Uh, the, the normal pension uh, procedure is 30 years service...55 years old. Now there are deviations. On a plant close-down, uh, you can't have different uh, applications there. The, the union and the company will, if you don't have 30 years, you have 28, and you're 55, they'll, uh, in most cases, they'll give you a way out on that. Or if you're close...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...they'll give you your pension. But to get uh, the pension,...

Jennifer: The full pension.

Ike: ...full pension, now uh, see, uh, uh, people on early retirement, from uh, at 55 on up to uh, 62, they can get a supplementary pay see. Do you know what I mean by a supplementary pay? They get, they get, they can get their pension, which would be an early pension, but it would be low because uh, they don't have the, uh, enough years, you know, to amount to full, full amount.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: But the company re-negotiated with them, then you can get a supplementary pension...

Jennifer: To bring you up...

Ike: ...up 'til you're 62.

Jennifer: Wow.

Ike: Now, uhhh, lotta, wha- lotta people don't understand, but say at 55, you're getting \$800 a month.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: That, that is your pension plus the supplementary pension \_\_\_\_\_ you're gonna get.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: Well, at age 62,...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...you go on social security.

Jennifer: Right, [inaudible].

Ike: Supplementary drops off...

Jennifer: Social security...[inaudible]

Ike: ...but i-, it cannot go above \$800. If your social security were to take above 800, then they would cut your pension to keep that at the 800-dollar base. You understand that?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: It has to be, anytime you take that uh, you have to sign for that.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: But it doesn't, people say, "Oh, they're cuttin' my s-." No they can't social security.

Jennifer: They're cuttin' your...

Ike: They have to cut your pension.

Jennifer: ...pension.

Ike: They can't mess with...

Jennifer: They can't mess with your social security. No, right.

Ike: Mmm-hmm.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah. That's how my father is being dealt with.  
(laugh)

Ike: Yep.

Jennifer: That's the situation I, as I understand it.

Ike: But o-, on any plant \_\_\_\_, uh, uh, uh, any plant shutdown, the-, they have a con-, contractual right to, to change the 55-30 thing to give it a little uh, bit a flexibility.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah.

Ike: People can go out with less age or less service than you would...[inaudible]...combine service and uh, uh, age factor.

Jennifer: Yeah. See that's a good idea. That's...

Ike: Yeah. Well, that's....

Jennifer: ...'cause for people that have...

Ike: [inaudible]. But each plant had, the n-, they negotiate each plant. What they're gonna apply is not a national figure. It's like Bridgeton had their, Alton had theirs and Huntington negotiated theirs.

Jennifer: Mmm, yeah, right.

Ike: But they've let people go out...[inaudible]...so much time, so much...[inaudible]...so many years of service.

Jennifer: Um, I guess, speaking of the pensions, um, do you have any reflections on what the closing of Owens uh, means to Huntington, what it means to you? You know, what the end...

Ike: You mean what the closing of the...plant...

Jennifer: ...economically and emotionally...mmm-hmm.

Ike: You mean here?

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: Huntington?

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: It had quite an impact.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Uh...

Jennifer: I mean, that's the, obviously, that's the answer, but...

Ike: Yeah, uh, well, it's been coming over the years. I mean, each time they shut down and people laid off, it has economic, and this last time, you had, you only had uh, 'bout uh, 400 people, actually, they claim six, but uh, they was about 200 a them already on lay-off.

Jennifer: So it wasn't that many people at the end?

Ike: [inaudible]. Yeah, that's right.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: I-, i-, 'cause they had that many uh, on lay-off. See, you can uh, if, if you're uh, if you're called back within a year, then you, you keep your seniority.

Jennifer: Right, within a year.

Ike: If you're called back within a year.

Jennifer: And then after a year...

Ike: Yeah, so a lotta those people were already laid off. And that's 600, so I'd say 400 would be the impact o-, on, on, and uh, here in Huntington.

Jennifer: Hmmm.

Ike: Uh, pensions, uhh, like I've told a lotta people, is not guaranteed.

Jennifer: Hmmm. Yeah.

Ike: Uh, lotta pension programs have got into trouble.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: Ours could. Aaaa-, the internal revenue makes an audit every year and cites experience in what we can pay for the next 20 years on the pension program because of the money already...

Jennifer: Already...

Ike: ...there drawing interest and so forth.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: But, by two factors, uh, additional plants going down...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...an-, and, and not that much money going into your pension program, see that's...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...each contract you go to every two or three years whatever they are, sometimes they're two years, uh, so much money is allocated to go into that pension fund...

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: ...the maintain a certain amount.

Jennifer: Right.

Ike: And it...

Jennifer: The interest...

Ike: ...it is, it is a, a government control that they maintain that, that level.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: But if the industry goes down,...[inaudible]

Jennifer: There's not anymore money goin' there. (laugh)

Ike: That's right, that's right.

Jennifer: Yeah, that's it. That's it. That's scary. Um, maybe a better question would be what do you see taking Owens place in Huntington? What do you see in terms of the economic look-out for Huntington as a whole?

Ike: We don't, we don't have the industrial base.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Uh, to, to uh, acquire these people. I mean, to give 'em jobs. You, you don't have industry or comparable...

Jennifer: Sure, yeah.

Ike: ...to Owens-Illinois, comparable to Owens' pay rate, hourly rate...

Jennifer: Definitely.

Ike: ...and Huntington, uh, you only have, uh, uh, Marshall as your big employer, nickel plants may be the next. And where do you go from there?

Jennifer: Yeah. Real estate...what...

Ike: You don't have uh, you'd probably have to look McDonald's or, or uh, minimum wage uh, which is uh, so many dollars less than what Owens paid...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...per hour. So...

Jennifer: Oh, so many dollars.

Ike: ...you have an economic impasse there. That's not good.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Nothing take its place.

Jennifer: No. No, yeah, that's the question. So you don't know what's going to be happening?

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: That's frightening.

Ike: We uh, Huntington i-, is uh, we-, becoming a, a Marshall town and a retiree town...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: The two of 'em...

Jennifer: A bedroom community.

Ike: That's right. That's what, that makes the make-up of Huntington right now.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm, yeah.

Ike: More or less.

Jennifer: For Ashland, primarily almost too.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: There's a lot of uh,...

Ike: That's right. Yeah.

Jennifer: ...a lot of the, and that's going to be the trajectory if Ashland keeps growing, in, in relation to the, the huge industry there.

Ike: With Armco setting there...

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: ...and Armco is big down there so it, it's not good the way things are going. Ashland Oil...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: ...See, now, but uh, you don't know.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: It's a big thing right now, but uh, the payroll at Owens over the year has been a big asset to Huntington.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: The Owens uh, participated many, many uh, activities here in Huntington. They rea-, almost every...

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: You know, the money contributed to different causes here.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah. An, and non-political too pretty much, right?

Ike: Oh yeah. That's right. You, you never heard of Owens in the paper or anything, but boy, I know, we, we gave.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: To many, many things. You'll feel that.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah. That's how things get done.

Ike: Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: But uh, that's like our retiree group, uh, we, we participated in thing, you know, in fact, we're gonna uh, be in the uh, West Virginia Olympics tomorrow.

Jennifer: Oh. Are you?

Ike: Special Olympics. This was, this was city...

Jennifer: Ahh. Oh, you're going...West Virginia.

Ike: Tomorrow. Yeah, West Virginia is tomorrow.

Jennifer: Where is it?

Ike: I-, Marshall.

Jennifer: Oh. Marshall.

Ike: Yeah, Marshall, uh-huh, on the...

Jennifer: Well, that's a big deal, yeah.

Ike: Yeah. They, they, they house 'em 'ere in the dorms and ever-, and those little kids uh, it's something.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Yeah. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: It really is.

Jennifer: It is.

Ike: We're, we're still doing that, and we were in the March of Dimes this past March.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And uh, we're still doing a lotta...

Jennifer: Still active.

Ike: ...Recycling.

Jennifer: Oh good. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. Retired groups going ahead and staying in the recycling program. So still active.

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: Yes.

Jennifer: Wonderful. (laugh) That's wonderful. Now is there anything else you'd like to talk about um, regarding...Am I leaving out anything? Am I missing...?

Ike: I, I don't know, you got pretty well in depth there at times.



Jennifer: Several times. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah, I um, I don't know of anything 'cept that it, it's a loss. Uh, when I uh, when I go down uh, I'm down at the clubhouse on the retiree thing...

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: ...I'm a...

Jennifer: So it's still open down there?

Ike: ...I'm an officer in it, and we, we meet in the clubhouse once a month, first Tuesday at one o'clock.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: We have a dinner. We go on uh, bus trips.

Jennifer: Mmmm.

Ike: Branson, Missouri, Dollywood and places like that.

Jennifer: Dollywood?! (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. We went down there last year.

Jennifer: Did you?

Ike: And uh, we get together and then it's just, it's good.

Jennifer: Yeah. It's community.

Ike: Fellowship.

Jennifer: Yes.

Ike: Yeah. And, and 'cause you work. See, most, most really, a working man and/or woman, most of your life, waking hours, is with the company. You're working there eight, ten hours a day. Twelve hours goin' and comin', so forth. And, and more than you are as a family.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: Really.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: And, and boy you miss 'em.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Ike: When I retired, I missed 'em, but I kept, I said well, I'm gonna be busy. I had been into different things.

Jennifer: Yeah. I'm sure you have. (laugh)

Ike: That much, you know. But uh, it's uh, it's something that uh, i-, it's hard to realize it's gone.

Jennifer: Yeah. Yeah.

Ike: I walked, I went in the other day, in the plant, you know.

Jennifer: Oh, did you?

Ike: For some things, retiree things. We got a few things out of there for retirees, you know, the plant manager gave us a right to get, you know.

Jennifer: Mmm-hmm.

Ike: And it is terrible.

Jennifer: Ohhh!

Ike: It's a ghost.

Jennifer: Yeah, I bet.

Ike: Just a ghost.

Jennifer: I bet. And you don't get that kind of community from uh, jobs these days, you know.

Ike: No.

Jennifer: Not usually.

Ike: It's true. I, we were there in a good time.

Jennifer: Yeah. The best.

Ike: Most my years an, an, and all were uh, a good working time. And uh, things went along so well. You know, you look back and (laugh) We had a lot of fun working, too.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: Lot of things going on.

Jennifer: Yeah. Sure. I'm sure. I'm sure. A lotta...

Ike: Yeah. The other day...you know, i, i, if a person would, take time out and just uh, write a book on everything that went on in that plant, it'd be somethin' to read. (laugh)

Jennifer: A day in the life, huh? (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. (laugh) [inaudible] Yeah.

Jennifer: That'd be, that'd be humanity, right there. Right there.

Ike: Right, uh-huh.

Jennifer: Well, that's what we're tryin' to do. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. Right.

Jennifer: A little bit. (laugh)

Ike: A little bit there.

Jennifer: A little bit. Gettin' some of it out.

Ike: Yeah, yeah.

Jennifer: But um, thank you for...

Ike: Oh yeah.

Jennifer: ...talking with me. Uh, these things on the floor, are you wanting to go over those with me on tape or those things....?

Ike: Oh uh-huh. I, I, you've seen these. That's the paper we used to have there every week, we had the Owenizer.

Jennifer: The Owenizer?

Ike: An, and it goes back and it takes in the social programs in the plant. Each department is uh, represented there in a, a, by somebody that would write from his or her department.

Jennifer: Uh-huh.

Ike: And everything, and then our, the awards, uh, each year, we had a, a, a awar-, service award and all this. People, you know, 20 years...

Jennifer: Recognize 'em.

Ike: ...40 years. Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Ike: And retiring. I wrote for the machine repair in there over the years. (laugh)

Jennifer: (laugh)

Ike: But I, I get a lotta things on, on, you know. Here, here's one. Here's a little thing that people, you know...

Jennifer: Machine repair.

Ike: ...they, they enjoy, enjoyed seein' their name in...

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: ...in the paper.

Jennifer: Sure.

Ike: Make it, you know, as lively as you could.

Jennifer: That's wonderful. Um, anyway, I'll look at these off tape. Uh, thank you very much. (laugh)

Ike: Yeah. Right-O.

END OF INTERVIEW